Changes In Methods Of Production

Function Of The Cottage Industry:

* The industry consisted of manufacturing with hand tools in cottages owned by peasants and work sheds
* It came from both peasants desires to supplement agricultural earnings and capitalists wanting to employ for low wages
* Organized by the putting out system

History of The Industry (Before, During, and After):

* Prior to the growth of the cottage industry, agriculture was the main source of income for rural workers
* The traditional guild system was also immensely popular before the start of the cottage industry, and during the course of the industry, there were many vocal critics of some of the guild system’s practices
* Cottage grew in large part of the fact that the system was flexible and there was an abundance of unemployed laborers
* Textiles, silverware, garments, etc. were products of this vast system
* By the 19th century, new changes in production began to lead way into the industrial revolution, making cottage outdated

Effects On Groups and Individuals:

* Rural workers started to become less self-dependent for production
* Work such as handloom weaving became a family affair, as operating machinery was the man’s job, and tasks such as preparing threads were done by women and children
* There was conflict between workers and employers over weight of materials and quality of work
* While women could enter the workforce, their wages were much lower than that of men

The Guild System:

* The guild system was a system of trade based associations which received rights to trade and to train apprentices and hire workers
* Guilds had exclusive rights to sell certain goods, obtain raw materials, etc.
* They restricted their work to Christian men who had several years of work experience, paid fees, and sometimes had family connections
* Enlightenment thinker Adam Smith questioned the existence of the guilds, calling them exclusionary and outdated for large scale production in the rising centuries to come